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Environmental Quality Council
STATE OF MONTANA
EQ NEWS

Box 215, Capitol Station, Helena, MT 59601

Vol. 2, No. 2 Senator Elmer Flynn, Chairman

July 29, 1974 John W. Reuss, Executive Director

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MONTANA AS "NATIONAL SACRIFICE AREA" MAY BE NO JOKE

Montana cannot make national energy policy; however, the state can try to influence the federal government when it makes its policy. How the state can influence the federal government and what effects federal policies can have upon the state will be examined in the EQC's energy policy study. In passing Senate Joint Resolution 24, the 1973 Legislature directed the Environmental Quality Council to undertake the preparation of a state energy policy that will recommend an energy policy which will "insure a reliable and adequate supply of energy in a manner consonant with preservation of environmental values and the prudent use of the state's air, land, water and energy resources." There are many hard questions with respect to Montana's future agricultural growth, sustained economic development and maintenance of environmental quality which must be answered by the decision makers as well as the people of the state. The EQC's Energy Policy Study has been designed to be a tool to assist legislators in deciding where Montana wants to go in the coming decades. The study will be available in November.

Working closely with the Montana Energy Advisory Council (MEAC), coordinated by Lt. Gov. Christiansen, EQC has attempted to uncover a federal energy policy. Discussion dismissing a federal energy policy that will turn Montana into a "national sacrifice area" should take a look at a report on "Coal Extraction R and D Program" by the Coal Extraction Task Force of the Department of Interior (December, 1973).

Maximum reliance upon surface mined coal to meet long-term energy demand, "would exhaust the current surface mine reserves in the West by 1996", according to the Task Force report. This reliance upon surface mined coal, termed as "strategy 1" in the report, "would cause rapid regional changes and exhaust a very high portion of reported surface reserves in both the east and the west by 2000." Surface mine development related to "strategy 1 would cause an initial rapid transition which may be followed by rapid downturn." "This focus (upon surface

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mined coal) has received much attention because : (1) Western lignites and subbituminous coals are low in sulfurs, (2) mine development is more rapid, (3) productivity is higher, (4) costs are less (than underground mined coal)." The Task Force which authored the report also found that reliance upon surface mined coal would not be dependable to meet the major portion of future energy demands.

This report gives some indication of the effect federal policies may make in the future of Montana. If "strategy 1" were implemented, which seems to be the present federal policy trend, then, according to the report, Montana would have a 22 year "boom-bust" energy development cycle with little long-range activity or new mines opening after this time period. The EQC does not believe that a reliance on a short-term "boom-bust" economy is in the state's best economic or environmental interest. The state does have a responsibility to the nation to help solve the energy crisis but it also has a similar responsibility to provide the nation and the world with agricultural products which is also in continually increasing demand. The state should not rely upon the federal government's energy decisions to determine Montana's future because what is convenient for the federal government is not necessarily what is good for Montana.

Note: a summary of the Department of Interior's Coal Extraction Task Force prepared by the EQC staff is available upon request from EQC.

NEW ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS JULY 1-29

Date Received	STATE --- Subject	Originating Agency	
7- 1-74	Grandview Heights. Proposed subdivision in Gallatin Co. 213.96 acres divided into 57 lots.	DHES	N
7- 1-74	Luther Bierwagen Livestock Operation. Request for a livestock waste control facility permit. Located near Manchester. Capacity is approx. 500 head.	DHES	N
7- 2-74	Hyalite Foothills Subdivision No. 1 and Hyalite Foothills Subdivision No. 2. Proposed subdivisions in Gallatin Co. 356.712 acres divided into 91 lots.	DHES	N
7- 2-74	Hyalite Meadows. Proposed subdivision in Gallatin Co. 81 acres divided into 26 lots.	DHES	N
7- 3-74	Staley Feedlot. Request for a livestock waste control facility permit. Located approx. 9 mi. w. of Billings. 4.5 acres. Capacity for approx. 950 feeder cattle	DHES	N

New environmental impact statements (continued).

Date Received	STATE --- Subject	Originating Agency	
7- 3-74	Superior East River Bend access Easement. Proposed construction of access road under w. end of Interstate 90 Clark Fork Bridge approx. 6 mi. e. of Superior. Road will permit access to an existing subdivision.	DH	N
7- 9-74	Fred Bergstrom Confined Livestock Operation. Request for a livestock waste control facility permit. Located approx. 10 mi. n.e. of Brady. Capacity for approx. 1,200 swine.	DHES	N
7-12-74	230 KV transmission line extending approx. 110 mi. from Colstrip electrical generating units 1 and 2 at Colstrip to Broadview. Line is proposed by Montana Power Co. and Puget Sound Power and Light Co.	DNR&C	D
7-16-74	Eugene Thompson Swine Operation. Request for a livestock waste control facility permit. Located approx. 20 mi. w. of Reserve. Capacity is approx. 600 head of swine.	DHES	N
7-17-74	James Baker Confined Livestock Operation. Request for a livestock waste control facility permit. Near Park City. Capacity is approx. 300 swine.	DHES	N
7-18-74	Western Energy Co. Amendment to surface mining permit No. 00003. Expansion of 166.3 acres in Rosebud Co.	DSL	N
7-19-74	Winnett-West. Project will replace a highway constructed in 1929 and improved in 1936. Begins in Fergus Co. approx. 1 1/2 mi. w. of county line common to Fergus and Petroleum Counties and extends approx. 9.3 mi.	DH	N
7-23-74	I-90-1(13)39, Sloway East and West; I-90-1(40)43, Superior West. 4-lane, 8.06 mi. F 254(10), Superior-La Vista. 2-lane, 2.2 mi.	DH	F

New environmental impact statements (continued).

Date Received	STATE --- Subject	Originating Agency	
7-24-74	Warden Bridge, Great Falls. Construction of a new bridge across Missouri River which will be a mate to existing Warden Bridge. Located on s.e. side of Great Falls.	DH	N
7-24-74	Relocation of Gallatin Field. Land acquisition; relocate FAS 290; relocate runway 3-21; enlarge g. a. apron and construct connecting taxiway; construct security fence; install emergency generator; relocate irrigation ditch; relocate access road; site clearance general aviation apron.	DH	N
7-25-74	Little Powder River Bridge Replacement. Located approx. 6 mi. s.e. of Broadus on FAP Route 23.	DH	N
7-29-74	Live Animal Air Exportation Facilities. Helena Airport. Application for waste discharge permit. Designed to accommodate max. of 80,000 lbs. of livestock.	DHES	N

D - draft statement
EW - emergency waiver
F - final statement
N - negative declaration

DHES - Dept. of Health & Env. Sciences
DH - Department of Highways
DNR&C - Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation
DSL - Department of State Lands

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